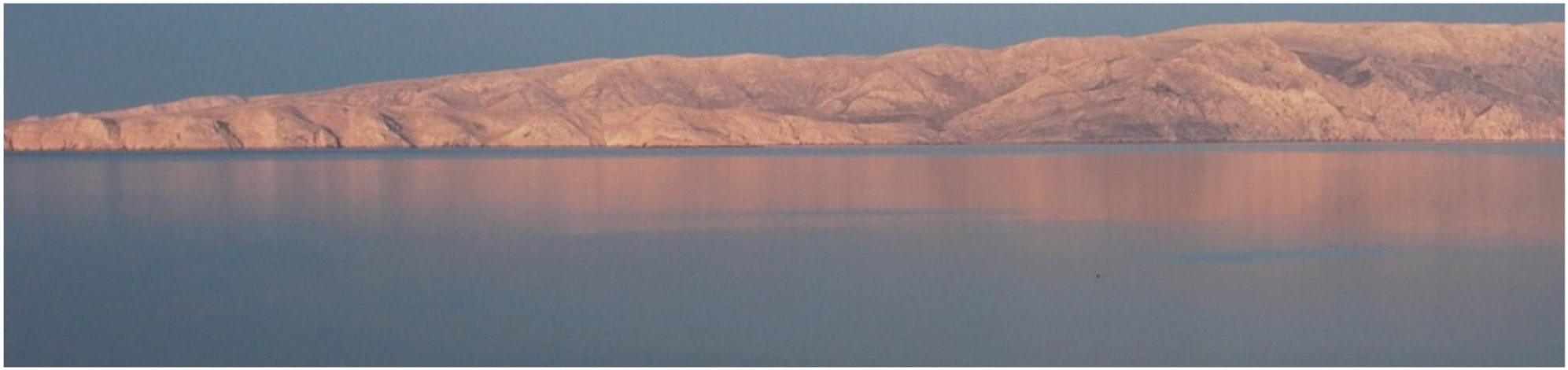

Das angebliche Evangelium von Jesus Frau

Oliver Achilles

Der Fernsehsender Phoenix hat am 30. Oktober 2018 eine ‚Dokumentation' mit dem Titel »Aufgedeckt: Geheimnisse des Altertums. Auf der Suche nach Jesus Frau« gebracht, in der Karin L.

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Oliver Achilles

2. November 2018

Rezension, Textkritisches, Weblink

Fälschung, Gospel of Jesus's Wife, Harvard Divinity School, Karin L. King, New Testament Studies 61, phoenix

Der Fernsehsender Phoenix hat am 30. Oktober 2018 eine ‚Dokumentation' mit dem Titel »Aufgedeckt: Geheimnisse des Altertums. Auf der Suche nach Jesus Frau« gebracht, in der Karin L. King, Professorin an der Harvard Divinity School, ausführlich zu Wort kam, die ein koptisches Evangelium von der Frau Jesu entdeckt haben will. Sie publizierte ihre ‚Entdeckung' 2014 und generierte umfassende Aufmerksamkeit.

Was in Phoenix nicht zu Sprache kam, ist der Umstand, dass die kompetente Fachwelt Kings Entdeckung nicht anerkennt. Der Band 61 der New Testament Studies zeriss den ‚Fund' in der Luft – am Ende blieb übrig, dass dieses Evangelium **eine Fälschung** war. Harvard und King blieben unbeeindruckt – die Homepage zu diesem ‚Evangelium' ist immer noch online – und Kings wissenschaftliche Reputation schwer beschädigt.

Phoenix hat den ursprünglich englischen Beitrag zum Thema zwar brav deutsch synchronisiert, aber ansonsten wohl völlig den eigenen Anspruch vergessen, der da lautet: »Mit seinem crossmedialen Programmangebot, das der Ausgewogenheit und Überparteilichkeit verpflichtet ist, erhellt phoenix Hintergründe und veranschaulicht durch differenzierte Analyse komplizierte Zusammenhänge«. In diesem Fall wohl eher nicht.

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"Jesus' Wife" Fragment: The Collective Negative Judgment

July 20, 2015

The latest issue of the journal *New Testament Studies* (vol. 61, no. 3, July 2015) contains a battery of commissioned articles from several scholars that collectively present the reasons that the putative Coptic fragment referring to "Jesus' wife" (GJW) is a modern forgery. The small galaxy of scholars are of unquestioned expertise in the language and the texts, and here combine to show why the putative fragment cannot be accepted as a genuine early Christian text. The table of contents of the issue is **here**. (The link is slow, but wait for it.)

Simon Gathercole's article, **"The Gospel of Jesus' Wife: Constructing a Context,"** presents reasons why a reference to a wife of Jesus doesn't really have a context in early Christian texts, contrary to Prof. King's proposal. And he reiterates reasons why the GJW fragment is a pastiche of phrases heavily indebted to the Coptic Gospel of Thomas.

Christian Askeland, "**A Lycopolitan Forgery of John's Gospel,"** gives in his article a full presentation of evidence that the putative fragment of a Coptic translation of the Gospel of John (another fragment in the small batch passed to Prof. King) is certainly a forgery (created through use of a 1924 publication), and why this means that the GJW fragment must be also. Among the reasons, the two fragments seem to be the same "hand," so, if the one is a forgery, the other is also likely one.

Andrew Bernhard, "**The Gospel of Jesus' Wife: Textual Evidence of Modern Forgery**," presents fully the evidence that the GJW fragment was created by use of modern published versions of the Coptic text of the Gospel of Thomas.

Christopher Jones, "**The Jesus' Wife Papyrus in the History of Forgery,"** recounts previous examples of forgeries purporting to be genuine Christian texts, and shows how these typically are intended to reflect trends in culture and thought of their time. The GJW fragment seems now to be the most recent instance of this.

Myriam Krutzsch and Ira Rabin, "**Material Criteria and their Clues for Dating,"** address the tests of the writing material and ink used to create the GJW fragment, showing the limits of these tests and how they cannot adequately address the question of forgery (especially if a forger is sufficiently clever).

Gesine Schenke Robinson, "**How a Papyrus Fragment Became a Sensation,"** summarizes the grounds on which it appears that the great majority of scholars with expertise in Coptic early judged the GJW fragment a forgery and now do so with greater confidence.

As of today, the Harvard Divinity School web pages on the GJW fragment **here** appear not to have been updated since the April 2014 publication of her article in the *Harvard Theological Review.* The articles in the new issue of *New Testament Studies,* however, collectively give interested readers a rather full presentation of reasons why the GJW fragment is now widely regarded a hoax, Prof. King perhaps the scholar most seriously and cruelly the victim of it. It appears that surely now, however, the appeals of various scholars for a candid response to the collective judgment that the fragment is a hoax must be heeded, and (unless the combined judgments of the aforementioned scholars can be shown to be erroneous) an effort should be made to trace (and disclose) the process by which it was attempted.

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